

The Leading Edge

Chaplain Assistant - Roles and Responsibilities

I would like to share with you an initiative that Air Staff is working on addressing. That initiative is the Roles and Responsibility of a Chaplain Assistant force. This issue has been dealt with in the last few years. During the last week of January, a Chaplain Assistant Visioning workshop was formed and met to discuss this subject matter. The group looked at and considered such things as respecting what each person brings to the table, and a renewed sense of pride and dedication in the Chaplain Service must be achieved.

Within the area of training, they discussed the need for defining what is it that the Chaplain Assistant should be providing to the Chaplain Service. Training should be tailored to accomplish those specific things that will be provided to the Chaplain Service; a highly skilled, highly trained individual, and capable of supporting the Chaplain Service Mission. When we talked about roles and responsibility, the following words; facilitating, coordinating, enabling, and empowering were used, rather than just simply providing for activities that are more suitable for the laity.

Another area that was discussed is that of readiness. I will say this; keep looking at the Leading Edge, because in the months to come, you will see more on the topic of force protection or physical security for chaplains.

This first task force that met to discuss Chaplain Assistant visioning, is the first of perhaps many. Another area they will be dealing with is the issue of roles and utilization. Visioning, that is something each person should be thinking about. Not only how we look today but also how we will look tomorrow. What does the Air Force of tomorrow need from its Chaplain Assistant?

-- CMSgt David Bennett, HQ USAF/HC
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